

PROVIDENCE and PRECEPT:

OR, THE

CASE

OF

Doing Evil that Good may come of it,

STATED and RESOLVED;

According to

Scripture, Reason, and the (Primitive) Practice

OF THE

CHURCH of ENGLAND.

With a more particular Respect to a Late Case of
Allegiance, &c. and its Vindication.

In a Letter to the Author.



And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? and he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying Spirit in the Mouth of all his Prophets.
2 Kings 22. 22.

A wonderful and horrible Thing is committed in the Land.

The Prophets prophesie falsely, and the Priests bear rule by this means, and my People love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof.
Jer. 5. 30, 31.

London, Printed in the Year 1691.

Bomph. 203 (19)

PROCEEDINGS OF THE

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF

PHYSIOLOGISTS

HELD AT THE

WYOMING HOTEL

AT THE CITY OF

LOANED BY THE

S I R,

I Have at last by the help of a good Friend (my Circumstances being such I could not purchase them) perused your *Case of Allegiance, &c. and its Vindication* : And finding them both of a Piece, I shall not go about to divide what you have so *Providentially* joyned. And therefore it will be needless to speak to the latter, by reason it stands only upon the Foundation of your former ; the Removal of which will be like *Sampson's* pulling down the Pillars, or main Prop, so that consequently the whole Fabrick must fall to the Ground. But before I enter the Field against such a mighty Champion and brave Challenger, (that is Armed Cap-a-pe, and Charges as it were in Armour) I will (for some Reasons) let you know what I am, by telling you what I am not ; and also the Reason of this my bold Undertaking. As to the first, know then that I am neither Lawyer, Divine nor Physician, Scholar or Pretender to Letters, and so you need not fear my troubling you with hard Words, or philosophical Distinctions, with the latter of which your *Case, &c.* is pretty well furnished ; but I presume that was only to let the World see how nicely you could split a Hair, or like a good Lawyer (for his Client) make the best of a bad Cause ; which in them is tolerable, if not commendable : But in a Grave, Learned Divine, it looks methinks as odd, as a *Protestant Priest preaching up a Mahometan*

hometan Doctrine, in opposition to Christian Precept. Pray mistake me not, as if nothing was intended by this Letter but a little Railery, for you shall find when I come to serious Things I can talk seriously of them, and my Designs are honest and fair; and therefore will as much as in me lies endeavour to give no Offence, by confining my Discourse to Generals, without concerning my self with any Particulars: For my aim is not to expose bad Men but ill Principles, which I am sure are destructive to all Civil Governments in the World. And in Prosecution of which, I will at your own Game (for nothing but Diamonds cut Diamonds) play you *Text* against *Text*, and then leave your self, or any other *Providential* Divine, to judge of the matter. I confess you have (according to your own stating the Case) taken a great deal of Pains in transferring an Allegiance from a Legal and Rightful King to a *Providential* one, or (in your own Phrase) from the Person who hath still a Legal Right (and, as you say, he may recover it if he can) to another, whom your self owns (for there cannot be two Legal Rights at one and the same time) hath no such Title; and all by a nice Distinction, Though the Man is in Being still, the King is gone; which Learned Distinction I presume you took from the Measures that was taken in Forty one, by Reason 'tis so agreeable with that Rebel Notion (which our Law condemns) of *taking up Arms against the King's Person to defend his Authority*; which Republican Notion I am sure can never be serviceable to the present, nor any *thorough Settlement* whatever. And I am confident you did not meet with any such Doctrine in Bishop *Overal's* Convocation Book. Which happy Book, if you had not *Providentially* met with, the Church, as well as the State, had (as to that Point) lost a great Champion,

Pag. 26.

Pag. 16.

pion, and poor distressed Subjects the Advantage of knowing their Duties to the Supreme Authority when ever a Civil Government is changed, by Peoples following the conduct of your *Providence* contrary to *Precept*.

But it may be objected, Why should I concern my self with Things so much out of my way? Or, as the saying is, *A Cobler should not go beyond his Last*. To which I answer,

A Stander by may (as often it happens) see more than a Gamester; and so it commonly appears when as opportunity serves he discovers the Mistake. Besides, though I am but poor in Purse, yet I am rich in Faith, and inclinable to believe (with some old Philosophers I have heard talk of) my Soul may not be inferior to other Bodies let them shine never so Gay or Glittering. And (as you, use to tell us) God is not a Respector of Persons; which is a good Argument for me, and every good Christian, to set a value upon his Soul, let his Body be never so poor and contemptible: And that is one Reason of my Enquiry into the Reasons you have given the World, both for your conforming and non-conforming to the present, &c. For you (like the Children of *Israel*) did halt along time between two Opinions; and (I am apt to believe) had not you met with Something besides the Convocation Book, you had (as you tell us) perhaps *stuck* till this time where you did *stick*; for *stick* you did, till Mr. *Jenkins's* kind hand (more than the Bishop's Convocation Book, as I shall shew you by and by) relieved and haled you out of the Mire, and set you safe upon dry Land, on which you now stand as firm as a Rock.

Dr. Sher-
lock's Pref

But before I enter upon the Premises, I will give you a second Reason (which is indeed the chief) for my so doing,

1 Thess.
21.

doing, *viz.* I having prov'd my Soul of as Noble an Extract as your own; and that the Eternal Peace and Welfare of it depends upon our Allegiance and Submission to the Supreme Authority: *For they (as you say) that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation.* I judge it well worth the while to observe the Apostle's Rule, of *proving all things, and holding fast that which is good.* Which is (I hope) a sufficient Reason to excuse my Presumption, in enquiring whether you are not more mistaken in St. Paul's meaning as to your New Case, &c. than you were in the Case you had formerly in your Eye, (as you tell us in the *Preface*) when you proved he meant no such thing. And as to that Case, you still think you were in the right, and, truly, so do I, and yet you must be mistaken either then or now. And that it was then, and not now, do's not appear to any Body but your self, that I know of, neither have you produced any Authority to convince the World that you are more in the right now, notwithstanding you have (possibly) another Case in your Eye: so that, for ought I can see, you may be as much out now, as you were before; and, if so, what are we the better for your new Discoveries, (in your *Case of Allegiance*) when you give us so little Encouragement (from your being so liable to mistake) to believe you.

'Tis true, you have taken a great deal of pains to make the *Convocation Book* speak (as you would make the World think) very plain to the Point; but how much it serves your turn, (notwithstanding your nice Distinctions, and ringing the Changes between *Divine* and *Humane Entails*, *Legal* and *Providential Kings*, and *Thorough Settlements*, &c.) hath already been demonstrated by more skilful hands. But though that Book did you but little service, yet there was other Writings that would have

have done the trick to an hair, such as *Hobs, Baxters, Owens, and Jenkins, &c.* But, I presume, your not strengthening your Case, &c. with quoting those Authors, was because their Tenents did not so well agree with the Doctrine of that Church which you pretend to be of. But to the Point in hand; and the better to inform my self and others, I will (as well as I can) observe some kind of method, *viz.*

I will first lay down your providential *Hypothesis* on which your Case, &c. is built, and (as you have very wisely observed) if the World do not judge it a right Rule to go by, you know not where to fix one. Pag. 24.

Secondly, I will examine those Texts of Scripture which you quote to prove it.

Thirdly, I will draw up some useful Inferences, very necessary for practical Reformers of Church and State.

But before I proceed, I cannot but take notice of *that* Dr. Sherlock's Pref.
one thing you thought necessary to recant; but though it is but one, yet it is the only one on which the Case turns, &c. And truly you were in the right, for otherways you had given room for *Richard against Baxter, &c.* Besides, your *Case of Allegiance*, if compar'd with your *Case of Resistance*, would have been very little to the purpose, save only to serve a present Case which has possibly fallen in your Eye. And if so, 'tis but reasonable your Judgment should vary (not so much with the Times, but) according to the different Cases that at different Times chance to fall in your Eye. And also 'tis but just upon every such occasion to strain (I do not mean Conscience, but) your Art and Skill to make our blessed Lord and the Apostles to go hand in hand with you to gain the Point. But now if any Body should ask me this Question, *viz.* How shall we know the Doctor did better understand *Sr. Paul* when he writ his *Case of Allegiance*, than he did when

when he writ his *Case of Resistance*? Let me perish if I could tell what to answer, and therefore I leave that, Sir, to your self, and so proceed to what I promis'd, viz. the laying down the *Hypothesis* on which your Case, &c. is built. And I cannot do that better, than in the words of a great Man, (when Time was) as I have found them ready drawn up to my hand about 40 Years ago; and I dare be bold to say, they would have been as good a *Preface* to your Book as that you have writ; and do but read your own Name for his, and you will, perhaps, be pleas'd, to see how exactly it agrees with your own Notions of *Providential Rulers*, and *Civil Governments*; but take them in the Author's own words, and then judge of the matter.

[*Mr. Jenkins's Recantation: Or, his Acknowledgment, by way of Petition, to the Parliament, wherein he confesseth his Sorrow for his acting against the State, and the unsutableness of it to his Calling and Profession. As also the Parliaments Answer to his Petition, as it was printed in the Year 1651.*]

To the Supreme Authority the Parliament of the Commonwealth of England.

The humble Petition of William Jenkins Prisoner.

Humbly sheweth,

That Your Petitioner is unfeignedly sorrowful for all his late Miscarriages, whether testified against him, or acknowledged by him; and for the great and sinful unsutableness of them to his Calling and Condition. That upon earnest seeking of God, and diligent enquiring into his Will,

Your

Your Petitioner is convinced that the Alteration of all Civil Governments are ordered by and founded by the wise Providences of God, who removeth Kings, setteth up Kings, & ruleth in the Kingdoms of Men, and giveth them to whomsoever he will. That the Providences of this God have, in the Judgment of Your Petitioner, as evidently appeared in the Removing of others from and Investing Your Honours with the Government of this Nation, as ever they appeared in the taking away or bestowing of any Government in any History of any Age in the World. That he apprehends that a Refusal to be Subjects to this present Authority, under the Pretence of upholding the Title of any upon Earth, is a Refusal to acquiesce in the wise and righteous Pleasure of God ; such an opposing of the Government set up by the Sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth, as none can have Peace either in Acting in or Suffering for. And Your Petitioner looks upon it as his Duty to yield to this Authority all active and chearful Obedience in the Lord, even for Conscience sake, To promise (he being required) Truth and Fidelity to it ; and to hold forth the ground of his so doing to any as God shall call him thereunto, &c.

The rest relates only to his particular Condition and Imprisonment ; an Inlargement from which he very humbly and submissively prayed for, which was granted him in the following Words.

Resolved that Mr. Jenkins be pardoned both for his Life and Estate, and that Mr. Attorney General be required to prepare the Pardon to be passed under the Great Seal of England, and that his Body be forthwith discharged from Imprisonment, and his Estate from Sequestration.

Which extraordinary Favour he obtained through the Mildness of that Government to poor Delinquents. And

here give me leave to observe, (*viz.*) Had such a Case been printed in *Oliver's* time, it would have posed a good Divine (no dispraise to your self) to know, whether you had taken your Notions of *Providence* from *Mr. Jenkin's* Petition, or he his from your *Case of Allegiance* : For, in truth, they are so very like, that it creates a just Supposition of your being one of his Pupils. And this is the first Thing I promised, (*viz.*) The laying down the Hypothesis on which the Foundation of your Case, &c. stands. And I will appeal to all Mankind, Whether this *Providential* Principle would not serve for the French King, the Grand Signior, nay, a *Marssinello*, or a Protestant Joyner? provided he could but get enough of the Mob on his side to knock out the Brains of their Opposers, the better to instruct them to whom the Sovereign Power do belong; especially when they are strong enough to *Crush* them into Obedience. For that is (it seems) one Rule you go by to know when a Government is thoroughly settled. But thanks be to God he hath given us a better; for if Power to *Crush* be a sufficient one, then no body can deny but *Marssinello's* was a thorough Settlement in *Naples*. And though his Reign was but short yet his Power was great, and he did *Crush* all that opposed him; and had he not met with a Stroke from a *Providential* Hand (which possibly thought *Killing no Murther*) he might have lived to have given Laws like a Conqueror to that great and populous City. And by your, and *Mr. Jenkin's* Hypothesis, a Divine Right for so doing.

Which brings me to the second Thing I promised, (*viz.*) The examining those Texts of Scripture which you quote to prove your new Doctrines by. And though those are several, yet the main stress of the point lies on *Romans 13. 1, 2. Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers. For their is no Power but of God: the Powers that*

that be are ordained of God. Whoſoever therefore reſiſteth the Power, reſiſteth the Ordinance of God : and they that reſiſt ſhall receive to themſelves damnation. Now I muſt confeſs ſince you have taken leave of your own Judgment of the Apoſtle's meaning in that Place, it will be the more difficult to convince you, by reaſon it will not perhaps ſute ſo well with the preſent Caſe that you have in your Eye. However (from a knowledge of your humble Chriſtian temper of not *thinking your ſelf too old* Pref. *to learn*) I will preſume to attempt it, though I know at the ſame time my ſelf uncapable; and therefore am inclinable to believe you had far more perſwaſive Reaſons for Recanting your former Tenets than what you are pleaſed to give us in Print. But to the point; 'Tis true the Apoſtle requires a Subjection to the Higher Powers, &c. but can it be imagined that the Apoſtle means by the Higher Power any that ſhall attain or get poſſeſſed of it by Force or Violence? (which your Caſe, according to your preſent underſtanding of the Apoſtle, ſeems to imply) Or by Subjection, a transferring an Allegiance which becomes due only to a Rightful and Lawful Prince, to another which has no other Right to be ſo but Power to *Crush*, &c. then it is rational to conclude, There never was any ſuch Thing as an Uſurpation in the World; and though ſome have waded to the Throne in Blood, and their Crimes have been of a Crimson dye, yet their being but once fixt there, they become Innocent, and as White as Snow: And being inveſted with *your Authority* muſt not only be ſubmitted to, but owned as a True and Rightful Liege Lord and Sovereign. And all for this Reaſon, (*viz.*) *They that Reſiſt ſhall receive to themſelves Damnation.* And yet, with your good leave, I ſuppoſe this word Reſiſtance is not to be underſtood in ſuch a Latitude as you would have us underſtand that of Power; for then the Refuſal of our Prince's Command,

Dan. 3 21.

let it be what it will, would entitle a Man to Damnation : For he that refuseth the Commands of his Prince, doth resist, as *Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego*, for which they were all cast into a fiery Furnace, (which was indeed the height of *Passive Obedience* ;) yet I believe no Body supposed them to be in that miserable state for disobeying the King's Command. From which I observe, (as I have heard divers of your Function say) we are not in many places of Scripture to take our blessed Saviour, or the Apostles words in a strict literal Sense, but according to the best Exposition that agrees with the general Scope and Design of the Gospel, and then I am sure it is both natural and rational to understand that place of *St. Paul*, viz. *There is no Power but of God*, &c. must be all legal and rightfal Power, which must certainly be imply'd, as your self once thought you had sufficiently proved.

Amos 3.
16.

That there is no Power but of God is true indeed, for God being Omnipotent, there cannot be any Power but by his permissive, or approbative Will, which was always allowed of as a Divine Distinction of God's Will ; and without it, how harsh and untunable would several Texts of the Bible sound in the Ears of a good Christian, as for Instance : *Shall there be Evil in the City, and I the Lord hath not done it ?* And now to take this place in the Sense that you do the Apostle of Power, is certainly to make God the first and prime Cause of all Evil that shall be done in a City, or indeed any where else ; which Notion may serve well enough for an Atheist, but how well it becomes any Body that pretends to Religion, do you judge.

I pray how many Rapes and Robberies, and cruel Murders (I pray God they be not owing to such horrid Notions of Power giving a Right) have been barbarously committed lately in our City and Liberties of *London*, which

which Almighty God has been pleased to suffer and permit to be done by the powers of Hell and wicked Men, which the but taking the foregoing Text in your sense of Power, &c. and it frees them all, by charging the Crimes upon God himself, which to me appears little less than Blasphemy, and it would make an honest Christian's heart tremble with the thought of such a Notion.

And then again in the Cases of *Pharaoh*, where it is said, *God hardened Pharaoh's heart*. Now I know not what you may think, but it is the Opinion of great Divines, that those Words ought not to be taken in a literal Sense, but that God knowing the baseness and falseness of his heart, did permit the Sorcerers and Magicians of *Egypt* to imitate *Moses* and *Aaron* with their Enchantments, which deluded *Pharaoh* to that degree, that he thought it was nothing but the pure effects of Magick, only he thought *Moses* and *Aaron* to be better Conjurers than the rest, and so his heart became hardened through the belief it was all but a Trick. And in like manner it may be said God hardens all our hearts, when he (through our high Provocations) withdraws his Divine Spirit (which no doubt was *Pharaoh's* Case) from us, and delivers us up to strong Delusions, insomuch that we believe a Lye; though in truth it proceeds from our own wilful stubbornness, in not being governed by the truth of his Word, which is the everlasting Rule we ought to be ruled by: And if we once forsake that, 'tis but just that God should forsake us, and then 'tis no wonder if (with *Pharaoh*) we cry, *Who is the Lord that we should obey his voice? We know not the Lord, neither will we, &c.* Ex. 5. 2. From all which (as one Text explains another) 'tis reasonable to conclude, that *St. Paul's* requiring Subjection to all Powers, his meaning is all lawful Powers; for if (as no Body doubts) there be any such thing as unlawful

ful Power, 'tis Frenzy to suppose he should require Subjection to them any other ways than it is consistent with common Prudence and Self-preservation. I mean such a Subjection as our blessed Lord tells us of, which is paid to a Thief if he be stronger than the strong Man whose House he robs. Besides, there be few but what know there is a mighty difference between Subjection and Allegiance, for Example, If a Man lives in *France* or *Spain*, or any other Prince's Country, he must, nay ought to be subject to the Customs and Laws of any of those Princes Countries where he lives; but at the same time his Allegiance can be due to none but him whose natural born Subject he is.

But the better to understand this place of *St. Paul*, (and to reconcile you (if possible) to your own former Notions of it) let us compare it with another to the same effect, (for Divines tell us we must, for the better understanding the Scriptures, compare one Text with another) *By me Kings reign, and Princes decree justice.* That is, all legal and rightful Kings, and the Words imply as much; for how can any Body be God's Vicegerent upon Earth without his Authority, and then if so, it naturally follows, *That where the word of a King is, there is Power; and who shall say to him, What dost thou? And And why Power, because he holds his Authority immediate from God, and to him only can be accountable for his Faults, as several great Lawyers and Divines have often told us.*

But it may be objected, Has not any Body that can get themselves possess'd of a Crown, and the Regalities thereunto belonging, the same Authority, since the Apostle says, *There is no Power but of God, &c.*

To which I answer, That the Apostle means the same thing, viz. Legal and rightful Power, which is likewise there implied, for Force and Violence are different things

to Power and Authority; for Power implies an Authority for its being put in execution, which distinguisheth it from Force and Violence, which is nought but ~~to~~ Pikes and Staves commanded by the Knave of Clubs, *to* knock out Peoples Brains, to inform their Understandings: But Power, we know, supposeth another thing, and acts by a legal Authority, as for Instance: A Constable does not commit a Man (where there is just Cause) to the Stocks or Prison, by vertue of the Watchmen and their Staves which attend him; but by vertue of a legal Power and Authority which he derives from a Superior, and that from another, till it come to the Supreme, which is under God the King only, whose Authority cannot therefore be from the People who are subject to his, but he not to theirs, unless they could prove a legal Right to such a Power, both from the Laws of God, and the Laws of the Land where such things are done, if not, it cannot (in the way of speaking) be said to be done at all; for it is very usual to say such or such a thing cannot be done, when it cannot be done legally, but in opposition to the Laws of God and Man. And yet by sad Experience we know such things have been done, nay, to the very Alteration of Thorow Settlements, (I presume you will not deny) and that possibly there may be persons in possession of what you call God's Power (for there is none (as you say) but of him) without his Authority; if not, the Holy Prophet was mightily mistaken; *They have set* Hof. 8. 4. *up Kings, but not by me; They have made Princes, and I knew it not.* Now these Kings the Prophet mentions, no doubt were in possession of all the Rights and Prerogatives, &c. which gave them the Title, (as the foregoing Text stiles them) and yet God himself says, *He knew it not.* Which from your Argument of Providence appears very strange, for that Providence should permit persons to be invested with God's Authority, and he know nothing

nothing of the matter, save only that they were in actual possession, though not by him; which is a strong Argument of the permissive and approbative Will of Heaven, and none but what are fit for a dark Room and clean Straw, but will allow it. For how unreasonable is it to suppose that those Kings or Princes that are made so, and not by God, (that is, that attain to it by undue Methods) can have his Authority: And for that Reason God was pleased to shew his just Resentment of the Peoples going contrary to his Rule in those matters, by leaving his Complaint upon Record, *They have set up Kings, but not by me, &c.*

And since it appears that Kings may be set up, and not by God, then it naturally follows there may be two ways that persons may come to the exercise of the Supreme Authority; that is to say, a right and a wrong, for I know no other distinction; and I am sure our Saviour (though in another Case) says something to the same purpose, *Verily I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the Sheepfold, but climeth up some other way, the same is a Thief and a Robber.* And then consequently has but an indifferent Title, &c. Notwithstanding he may (through Power and Strength) be in possession, &c. And I do not doubt but what is required in a Priest having a legal Right to his Office, the same will hold good in his Superior the King. And so there was the less Reason for St. Paul (speaking of the higher Powers) to distinguish what sort of Power we ought to be subject to, no more than what sort of Parents the Fifth Commandment requires us to honour.

But to make (if possible) the Case more plain, we will compare St. Peter with St. Paul, (and though they differed in some other things of less moment, yet they both agree as to this matter) *Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake, whether it be to the King*

King as Supreme, or unto Governors, &c. Now there is certainly two Things to be considered before this Submission can become due. First, The Lawfulness of the Authority that makes the Ordinances; and Secondly, The Lawfulness of the Ordinances themselves. For this Place likewise cannot be taken in your Sense; for if it should, then it would oblige us to look no further, but positively to obey our Prince's Commands without reserve, let them be what they will, and you know how much that is against the Grain of this Protestant Kingdom. Then consequently we must understand St. Peter otherways then you now understand St. Paul, (*viz.*) a Submitting to every Ordinance of Man that does not contradict those of God. So that it is plain that Something is implied in those Words of St. Peter more than you are willing (in your *Case, &c.*) to allow, or else they would be a downright Contradiction to what he says elsewhere. *Whether it be right in the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.* So that if Ordinances (or Allegiances) of Man be set up contrary to those of God, we are not to take notice of them, though they had all the Powers of the Earth and Hell joyned with them for their Authority. But Secondly, We ought to consider the Rightful^{ness} and Lawfulness of the Authority that commands a Submission to their Ordinances, &c. unless it can be supposed there was never any but such in the World. Which I am pretty sure you will never grant, by reason it would condemn both the Law, and the Sense of all the Judges in *England*, touching the Rebellion in King *Charles* the First and Second's Time; which I perceive cost you some Time and Pains to get over, and yet could not without Blundering and making a downright Contradiction. For notwithstanding all those Distinctions you make to shew the Difference between that and the present (as you call it)

Acts 4:19.

thorough Settlement, yet it does not serve your turn ; for whatever *Cromwell* and his Adherents designed, either to alter or destroy all Laws and Religion, yet (agreeable to the Principles you go upon) that makes no Difference, but he had (as he was the Supreme Magistrate) as good a Title to our Allegiance (according to your Sense of the Higher Powers) as King *Charles II.* had before he *Abdicated* the Kingdom after his defeat at *Worcester*. All which, no doubt God (for the Sins of this Nation) suffer'd his Judgments then to begin at his own House, and with his own People; which brings me to the Approbative and the Permissive Will of God, which was always by your selves made use of for our not taking Measures by the prosperous Success of Things, and the Prosperity of the Wicked. The Consideration of which made the Prophet *Jeremiah* as it were Reason the Case with God himself; *Righteous art thou, O Lord, when I plead with thee; yet let me talk with thee of thy Judgments: Wherefore doth the way of the Wicked prosper? Wherefore are all they happy, that deal very Treacherously? Thou hast planted them, yea, they have taken root: they grow, yea, they bring forth fruit; thou art near in their Mouth, and far from their Reins.* And this Prosperity of the Wicked had likewise startled a great many good Men, and *David* himself was one of that Number, till he went into the Sanctuary, and considered there was an After-reckoning to account for. And then he could tell us of their being set in Slipery Places, and that their Prosperity was rather a Curse than a Blessing to ripen them for Destruction, in Vindication of God's Righteous Dealing with Wicked and Rebellious Wretches. A notable Instance of this, we have in the Case of *Absalem*, where God permitted his Insinuations (*Oh that I were Judge in the Land, &c.*) to prevail so far, as he not only stole the Hearts but the Allegiance also of his Father's Subjects,

*is his Judge
no doubt
suffer'd then
sin &c.*

*Jere. 12.
1. 2.*

Ps. 73. 17

Subjects, and the wisest of his Father's Counsellors went over to him; insomuch that at last he attempted not only to take the Crown from his Father's Head, but persued him likewise to take (no doubt) his Life also. And had not God himself stept in between, by defeating the Counsel of *Achitophel*, he had peradventure (being both able and willing) gained his point. I only hint these Matters, because you lay a great Stress upon *Providence giving a Success*, &c. and if he had succeeded (as such Things have been) I suppose none but ~~what~~ ripe for *Bedlam* would have attributed it to the Will of God any other way, than it is his Will that we Kill, or Steal, or break any other of his Commandments, which we see he permits every day to be done. And I could put you in mind of another instance, which far exceeds that of *Abshalem*, where Almighty God was pleased to permit a Company of Rebels and Traytors (I may Lawfully so call them, by reason many of their Names remain still upon Record) to proceed so far as not only Resist, but Imprison, nay, put (I had almost said Crucify) to Death their true Liege Lord and King; and then, like wicked *Ahab*, ~~took~~ Possession of the Vineyard, and all by such *Providential* Principles as yours and *Hobbs's*. 'Tis true you would by a nice Distinction make a Difference between his and yours; but it is so much like all the rest that it will not pass Muster. And therefore all such Loyalty and Allegiance that is built upon such weak Foundations must needs (like the House built upon the Sands) tumble down upon the least Storm that shall arise. But (to speak in your own Phrase) is not this to build with Stubble, and daub with untempered Mortar? So that the more that is laid upon such rotten Foundations, do only serve at last but to make the bigger heap of Rubbish. For if Power and Success be a sign of providence prospering an undertaking, then (as to Right) there

Mat. 7.27.

there can be little or no difference between the Thief and the honest Man; for Providence are as it were alike to both, only She gives one Money or Goods, but not a sufficient strength to defend them; and gives another none, but power enough to take them. Ay but say you, this will not hold in little petty Robberies, (because a Man may be call'd to an account by human Laws, that is (you say) the Reason) but you tell us, *God is not confined to human Laws.* And therefore what he doth by Providence, will hold in small matters as well as great. And I presume if there be any difference in breaking the 8th Commandment, he that steals the most must be the greater Transgressor, unless you think that quantity lessens the quality of the Crime. And as to that, I presume you know what a Pyrate (when accused) said to *Alexander the Great; I (says he) Rob but in a single Ship, but Thou with great Fleets and Armies.* For which bold Answer (as some say) *Alexander* pardon'd him. And it was but reasonable, for they both acted by one and the same providential Principle, of Power and Success giving a Right. And I am afraid the *Golden Farmer* might be infected with some such Notions of Providence, from his being so successful in his undertakings, for almost (as People say) 30 Years together, which made him (as the *Ordinary* told us) not like the Doctrine of Restitution.

Ca. pa. 7.

But all that think so, and are fond of such (*Covenant*) *Doctrines* and do believe them true, I would advise them to read and consider well the 21st verse of the 50th Psalm, *These things hast thou done, and I kept silence: Thou thoughtest I was altogether such an one as thy self; but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.* Or, *Eccles. 8. 11. Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the Sons of men are fully set in them to do evil.* From which
it

it is evident, That Prosperity and Success is no sign of God's approving the wicked Ways and Designs of bad Men, especially when his own Sacred Laws are broken to gain their Ends: For if we will not allow a difference between the permissive and approbative Will of Heaven, then (as I before observed) God must be the only Author of all Evil; and how much that borders upon (if not the same thing we call) Blasphemy, I shall leave it to your self to judge.

There is one place more I remember you quoted to prove your Case, &c. and that is our Saviour's Answer to that ensnaring Question of the *Pharisees* and *Herodians*, Mat. 22.
Is it lawful to give Tribute unto Cesar, or not? But our 17.
 Saviour well knowing their Designs, gave them an Answer according, *Render therefore unto Cesar the things that are Cesars, and unto God the things that are Gods. When they heard these words, they marvelled, and left him.* And well they might, for his Answer was no more to their purpose than it is to yours: For what relation had this Answer to your Notion of Possession and Success giving a Right, unless you had proved *Cesar* had no legal Right, and so was (according to your own distinction) but a *de facto*, and not a legal and rightful Emperor. Besides Tribute may be paid where Allegiance is not due, (as many in *Flanders*, and *Savoy*, and other places are too sensible of) and therefore our Saviour's was a fit Answer to their own answering the Question our Lord asked them, when they brought unto him a Penny: *And he said unto them, Whose is this Image and Supercription? They say unto him, Cesars.* So that it is plain, our Saviour bidding them *give unto Cesar the things that are Cesars, and unto God the things that are Gods*, is not to your purpose, for our Saviour we find in lesser matters declines being a Judge; *And one of the company said unto him, Master, Lu. 12 14.*
Speak unto my Brother, that he divide the Inheritance with

v. 18.

me. And he said unto him, *Man, Who made me a Judge, or a Divider over you?* And so in like manner in the other Case, without determinating the Point, which indeed was the only thing that the *Pharisees* expected, that so they might entangle him in his talk; and therefore he answer'd them, *Why tempt ye me ye Hypocrites, &c.* which was as much as to say, You know well enough those things before you ask, you have Rules and Laws which I came not to destroy, but to fulfil, &c. and then gave the aforesaid Answer on purpose to frustrate their expectations, and to put them in mind of what was due to God, as well as to *Cesar*. So that our Lord's Answer was no more a giving of new Rules to know what are *Cesars*, and what are Gods, than to what sort of *Cesars* they become due, well knowing God's Word is sufficient to instruct us how to determin that Case.

And so, according to my promise, I have briefly examin'd those Texts of Scripture which you urged in favour of your *Case of Allegiance, &c.* But having, as you see, compared them with others, they do not appear in my judgment to favor it all, and therefore what remains, is the third and last thing, *viz.* to draw [from your Notion of Providence and Success giving a Right] some useful Inferences very necessary for practical Reformers both of Church and State.

And first of all, If Power and Success gives a Right, &c. than those sort of People we call *Grumbletonians*, [for I believe there is no Government without] Heaven permitting them as the *Canaanites* were amongst the Children of *Israel* as Thorns in their sides, may take comfort from this wholsom [and as you call it] *providential* Doctrine; for notwithstanding they are in a state of damnation [as the *providential* Instruments of our happy by your] all the while they are a plotting and contriving to resist the higher Powers, &c.
Yet

Yet if they have the good Fortune [or Providence should permit them] to get uppermost, I presume then their Case may be altered, especially as to this World; but what it may be in the next you have not as yet [in your Case] told them.

But Secondly, this Doctrin promiseth the like Consolation to all the chief Heads of all the Mobilees in all Governments [though never so thorowly settled] in the World. And a Captain *Tom*, if he can but preach or persuade [as *Marfinello* did] enow of his Gang to espouse his Cause and Interest, he may, for ought I can see, purchase as good a Title to a Crown, as he has to his Commission; and if he succeeds [by your Rule] who dare question his Right, since you have given it the Divine Stamp, which puts me in mind of what a great Poet said, [in the Character of a Noble Peer who preached to the Mob much such sort of Doctrin] and I will make bold [they being much to the Point in hand] to transcribe them, only to let you see how good Wits jump.

*He preaches to the Crowd that Power is lent,
But not convey'd to Kingly Government;
That Crowns Successive bear no binding Force;
That Coronation Oaths are things of Course.
Maintains the Multitude can never Err,
And sets the People in the Papal Chair.
The Reasons obvious, Interest never lyes,
The most have still their Interest in their Eyes;
The Power is always theirs, and Power is ever wise.
Almighty Crowd thou shortens all Dispute,
Power is thy Essence, Wit thy Attribute.
Not Faith nor Reason make thee at a stay,
Thou leap'st o're all Eternal Truths in thy Pindarick way.*

Midal p. 6.

Athens

Athens no doubt did Righteously decide
 When Phocian and when Socrates was try'd.
 As Righteously they did those Dooms repent,
 Still they were wise whatever way they went.
 Crowds Err not, tho to both Extremes they run,
 To kill the Father, and recall the Son.
 Some think the Fools were most as Times went then,
 But now the World's o'r-stockt with prudent Men.
 The Common Cry is, even Religion's Test,
 The Turks is at Constantinople best.
 Idols in India, Popery at Rome,
 And our own Worship only true at home.
 And true but for the time, 'tis hard to know
 How long we please it shall continue so.
 This side to day, and that to morrow burns,
 So all are God Almighty's in their turns.
 A tempting Doctrin, plausible and new,
 What Fools our Fathers were if this be true.
 Who to destroy the Seeds of Civil War,
 Inherent Right in Monarchs did declare.
 And that a lawful Power might never cease,
 Secured Succession to secure our Peace.
 Thus Property and Sovereign sway at last,
 In equal Balances were justly cast.
 But this new Jehu spurs the hot-mouth'd Horse,
 Instructs the Beast to know his Native Force,
 To take the Bitt between his Teeth and flie
 To the next head-long Steep of Anarchy.

And how agreeable this part of the Peer's Character
 [of preaching to Mobilees] was to his Practice, and
 your new Notions of Allegiance, let the World judge.
 'Tis easie to draw divers other Inferences altogether, as
 useful for the Enemies of our *Israel*, as these two I have
 already

already named, but they would swell this Letter beyond its intended Bounds: And therefore I will haile towards a Conclusion; for by this time, I presume, I may ask you St. Paul's Question to King Agrippa, *Believest thou the Prophets? I know that thou believest, &c.* Yet your *Cafe of Allegiance, &c.* would almost persuade a good Christian to doubt it; for your prevaricating, according to the different Cases which at different times happens to fall in your eye, gives cause for a just suspicion. And your two last Books has made it too evident, that you do not (as to what you have formerly told us) believe your self; which must consequently create in us, poor Laymen, melancholy Considerations, in that we must venture our very Souls upon the Judgment and Integrity of such Priests who are as variable as the Weathercocks on the Steeples of the Churches they preach in. For it is not many Years ago that not only your self, but the whole University of Oxford rejected such Doctrines as your *Cafe, &c.* is founded on, witness the Judgment and Decree that past in their Convocation, July 1. 1683. against certain Books and damnable Doctrines, (as they were pleased to call them) consisting in all of 27 Propositions, the 10th of which I will give you in the very words, *&c.* because they are the same on which the whole stress of your *Cafe* relies on, and I wonder you did not place it amongst your own. The 10th Proposition, *&c.* runs thus:

Possession and Strength gives a Right to Govern. Success in a Cause or Enterprize, proclaims it to be Lawful and Just. To justify it, is to comply with the Will of God, because it is to follow the Conduct of this Providence.*

So you see you do but bring up the Rear to all these famous Heroes who have march'd before you, fighting the good Fight of Faith, (*in the Good Old Cause*) some

* Hobbs,
Owen's
Sermon
before the
Regicides,
Jan. 31.
1648.
Baxter,
Jenkins's
Petition,
Oct. 1651.

of which have not as yet finished their Course, and so are still but in expectation of their future Reward, but what that may be is no great matter: For if they grow Rich, and fill their Bags with *Crowns* here, they will trust to Providence for hereafter. And filling of Bags, you know, is such an Epidemical Distemper, that there are few but what are Infected with it. And *Judas* himself possibly had never coveted to have been one of the Twelve, but for the sake of carrying the Bag; and rather than not have it full, for a Sum betray'd his Lord and Master. And it is too plain, we all (the Priests not excepted) do much more mind the things that belong to our Profit and Preferment here, than our Peace hereafter. And our Saviour has told us, *The Children of this World are in their Generation wiser than the Children of Light*. But it is such a sort of Wisdom which will turn but to a slender Account at last, and therefore, as our Lord elsewhere says, *What will it profit a Man to gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul, &c.* But that is not much minded in our days. We may observe from the Universal Degeneracy of the Age we live in, that Truth and Justice, Religion and Loyalty are fled from amongst us, and that Almighty God (for our Sins) has (as he once did) permitted a *lying Spirit* to go forth and possess our Prophets, so that they prophesie falsely, and we love to have it so, &c. which strengthens the Argument of Heaven's permissive Will. And that those Texts cannot (without *abdicating* our Understandings) be understood in your Sense of *Providence* and *Success* giving a Right, which is the chief *Basis* on which your new Fabrick stands; but how long it will, Time, and the next change of ~~State~~ (if ever there be any) will best demonstrate. And truly should there be as many in your Time, as happened in the Life of the Famous Vicar of *Bray*, the Scheme

is.

Euk. 16.8.

Mat. 16.
26.1 Kings
22. 23.

is so nicely drawn, and your Case so exactly calculated to the purpose, that you may without Doubt or Scruple swear Faith and Allegiance to them all; nay, though they were all Competitors at the same time. And as they happen to be uppermost, you have (as you say) *God's Authority* for so doing. So that you are now (Thanks to Providence) pretty safe: For should our *Metropolis* be in as much danger by the *French* (which God forbid) as *Vienna* was not long since by the *Turks*, you (no doubt) would, like a good Christian, patiently submit, and pay both a chearful and active Obedience, (from your Notion of *Providence*) judging it *the Lord's doing, though it appear never so marvellous in our eyes*. For indeed *Passive Obedience* and *Nonresistance* were never more necessary ^{then} as now in your Case, &c. And yet after all I cannot but be amazed to see two such Cases as your *Resistance* and *Allegiance* come from one and the same (I will not say Heart, but) Hand, without blushing for the matter. But though you do not, I am apt to believe there are some (and of your own Function too, that do for you) not so much for your taking the Oaths, &c. (as no doubt a great many good Men may) but for your giving such Reasons as reflect upon the Honour and Reputation of the Church of *England*, and possibly may make many of Her weak Sons believe that She now owns the same pernicious Doctrines that her Clergy have been preaching and writing against ever since the *Reformation*, and strictly forbidding their Hearers the practising under no less Penalty than *Damnation*. But I find the Case as well as the Times are altered; *For then was then, and now is now*.

But to draw towards a Conclusion, I hope your Christian temper will lead you to a favourable Construction of this Letter, which I'll assure you was not (as I said in

the beginning) design'd to reflect on Persons or Things, but only to expose (as well as I could) pernicious Principles, which would, if universally receiv'd, quickly throw us from *St. Paul's state of Grace*, to *Hobbs's of Nature*. And what Advantage that would be to *preserve Civil Societies*, let the World judge. 'Tis true, you say God is not con'd to humane Laws, but at the same time 'tis reasonable to suppose though he be not, you and I, and all Mankind are; and the acting or doing any thing against humane Laws, (especially such which do not contradict his) is the same thing as breaking of God's Laws. And no doubt the doing so, is a *Resisting the Higher Power*, and they that Resist shall (as you say) receive to themselves *Damnation*: And if so, *What is Sawce for a Goose, is Sawce for a Gander*. And I know not how any Body (in the last Reign as well as in this) that have wilfully, or by chance (in keeping ill Company) fallen into such a miserable state, can get free of it, unless by a true and hearty Repentance. And *Restitution*, where it can be done, is (as you use to tell us) *the only Evidence of its being Sincere*. And without it, I cannot be persuaded but that such must remain in that lamentable state let them be never so prosperous and successful, unless you think *Success* can alter the very Nature of Things, which is something difficult to suppose, though your Case, &c. seems to imply it; which Case had it came out in a time of such a *Thorough Settlement* as where there were no Competitors, or any to make a Claim, I dare appeal to all Mankind, Whether it would not have been burnt by the Common Hangman, as a Libel against all Established (and in your own words, *Thorough Settled*) Governments in the World. And whatsoever your private Advantage may be, I am sure the Church nor the present state are no great Gainers by it: For I am of the Opinion your *Case of Allegiance* will

will no more preserve either from the Attempts of wicked and rebellious Wretches in this Reign, than your *Case of Resistance* did in the last. And therefore you may spare your pains, (unless it be to oblige your Book-seller) for you know this is a wicked and rebellious Nation, which are more apt to follow Example, than Precept. And therefore you did well in leaping (like the Belweather) over the Hedge, which was (I suppose) in hopes the rest of the Sheep would follow by the noise only. And truly if they do not, I can attribute it to nothing more than their being better taught heretofore by your self and others in those Times, when People generally thought them both orthodox and honest. And if what was said to *St. Paul* of Learning, might be truly said of Honesty, I am persuaded most of our Learned Clergy are pretty well in their Wits: For if *Possession gives a Right*, they ought for that Reason not to Abdicate their Livings (let what will happen) for fear People should think they were mad, in not acting according to their own Principles. But as the World goes, we may observe People act not as if *Godliness is great Gain*, but as if *great Gain is Godliness*. And if so, we may easily then guess who are the *Babes of Grace*, and the *Providential Favorites of Heaven*. For since (as you say) there are *Providential Kings*, as well as *Kings by Divine and Humane Intail*, and (by your Notions) they have Right, or no Right, but as they shall be (by *Providence*) in the Possession, then it consequently follows, that when ever it happens that a Dispute is between a Legal (which I take to be the same as a Divine) Right, and a Providential, or an Accidental one (for by your Rule there can be no difference) God is then by his Providence (if I may so say) fighting not only against his Divine Intail, but his own Eternal Rule, which distinguisheth what is Right and Wrong. And also the Doctrine of our

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Lord,

Lord, and the Apostles, *viz.* the least evil in the World ought not to be done, to procure the greatest good : For St. Paul positively says, *They that do evil that good may come of it, their damnation is just.* Which is a dreadful Consideration for all those that act by such pernicious Principles, and therefore the Apostle does justly stile such *Enemies to the Cross of Christ.* And indeed so they are; and to all Religion and Civil Government, that promote such Providential Notions, which seem to run counter to the positive Commands of the Almighty. And your self, and others of your Coat, have often told us, *We are not to follow Providence contrary to Precept.* And St. Paul himself (which I presume was as great and as knowing as any of you) bids us *be followers of him, no other ways than he was of Jesus Christ.* Which I think is a good Argument for others dissenting from you, when you dissent from your self, and the Truths which formerly you have taught. But, blessed be God, though you have Recanted, and as it were taken leave of them, yet they are nevertheless Truths for that, and we know where to find them ; and it is no small comfort to an honest Christian, that no such Republican Principles are to be found in the Doctrines of our blessed Saviour and his Apostles, nor in the Canons of our Church, notwithstanding the present Opinion and Practices of many of our Churchmen. And therefore 'tis highly rational what St. Paul adviseth; *Now I beseech you Brethren, mark them which cause Divisions and Offences, contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them. For they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.* Which we find too true, but 'tis to be feared they will deceive themselves too at the last, and then how significant and to the purpose will it be to ask the Apostle's Question, *What fruit had ye then in those things*

Rom. 3. 8.

Phil. 3. 8.

1 Cor. II.

I.

Rom. 16.
17, 18.

things whereof ye are now ashamed? But to draw (as you use to say) towards a Conclusion, I will end where you began, viz. with one Observation on the Title of your Book, in the following Words, &c.

Rom. 2.
21.

The Case of Allegiance to Sovereign Powers stated and resolved according to Scripture and Reason, and the Principles of the Church of England, &c.

Now as for Scripture, I think I have (and from your own former Sentiments of it) demonstrated that your Case will not stand that Test. But then secondly, for it's being agreeable to Reason, I shall (as being no Pretender to it) leave that to those who think themselves the only Criticks and Masters of it. But for the third and last, it being according to the Principles of the Church of *England*, is so astonishing that I know not well what to answer, save only that if it be, 'tis a Secret that has lay'n a long time concealed, as if Providence had not only reserved it for these times, but also designed you the happy Instrument of discovering so convenient a (Mufftich) Providential Doctrine so absolutely necessary in a Christian Church.

And now I dare appeal to all the proper Judges of Scripture and Reason, and the Principles of the Church of *England*, not excepting your self, (though you set up for one of the chief) whether your Case, &c. have answer'd (save only in the price of the Copy) your own Expectations, which were, I presume, to convince all Protestants of the Reasonableness of your Providential Hypothesis, which you indeed take for granted, and drive, *Jehu*-like, as if you had receiv'd Heaven's Commission to banish all the contrary Opinions out of the World. For you argue with all the Assurance, as if it was as plain as a Pike-staff, and as demonstrable as any Point in the Mathematicks, and that your self was never in the Right (as to your *Providential Rulers*) till this

happy Juncture, &c. But what makes it more acceptable at present is, the advantage the Protestant Religion has gained by your not complying with the *Providential Settlement* (till such time as you were in danger to have lost all) which no doubt was likewise the *Providential* Occasion of your more earnest seeking of God, and making inquiry into (not the revealed, but) the secret Will of God (which is a Note beond *Elab*) touching those matters, without which the Church of *ENGLAND* perhaps might have continued another Century or two without the happiness of such a *convenient Doctrine*. And that which makes it so to you, is worth observing; for if hereafter some ill Men (which *neither understand you nor Hobbs*) should throw it in your Dish that you writ in defence of King *William* and Queen *Marys* Right, &c. You may truly answer, it was no more for them, than it was for Captain *Tom*, or any Body else that can get into the Saddle, for there your *Providence* centers them. And when they are so fixt, they cannot (as you say) be without the Divine Authority; so that you need never write more on that Subject, for 'tis impossible for any Government to trump up that your Case, &c. will not as well serve, as it does the present, for which I think our most *Gracious King and Queen* have no great Cause to thank you. But if they do not, there are others that will, *viz.* our Commonwealth Friends, only I must tell you by the way, they are angry with you for two things: The first is, that you did not sooner meet with their spiritual Shuff to the heavy A——Christian. And the second, for your making it a Church of *England* Doctrine, when their Belief of the contrary was one of the chief Reasons of their deserting from it. But now you have taken down (as to that Point) the Partition-wall, and if you would be but as kind in other matters (as they think) of less moment,

no doubt you might bring them all within the Pale, &c. And truly since you have been so generous as to part with your darling, distinguishing Doctrine of constant, steady, and unsophisticated Loyalty to your Prince, which you learned from the Principles of your Church, as the *London* Clergy pleased to say * in their Address to the late King *James*, I think it would not be amiss (for so great a good) to gratifie them with the rest, without which 'tis to be feared they will still *stick* where they did *stick*; and you know how closely they always stuck to the Interest of the Crown and the Church, and therefore it would be worth while to gain to you so considerable a number of Friends. But (as our Lord told the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*) you are so nice and exact in paying of *Mint* and *Cumin*, that you omit the more weighty things of the Law, *viz.* *Justice, Mercy and Truth*, &c. though indeed neither is to be left undone. And yet if ever it could be thought convenient, I confess this is the only time to judge it tolerable, if not necessary, to settle (as in *Scotland*) a Religion suitable to the Inclinations of the People, and that may possibly fill up the Vacancies of those that cannot swallow your *Turkish Providential Pill*, notwithstanding its being so nicely and Philosophically prepared and gilded over by so famous a Christian Doctor. But the Experiment is altogether new, and till of late hardly amongst us known, but never practised by good Christians, and therefore the Apostle may very justly upbraid us, as he once did the *Galatians*, *O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the Truth*, &c. And truly unless we are so, we could not be so grossly imposed upon, as to be whiffled about with every new wind of Doctrine. To prevent which, *Solomon*, I think, gives the best Advice in the World, *My Son, fear thou the Lord, and the King: and meddle not with them that are given to change.*

* London
Gazette,
Febr. 16.
1684.

Gal. 3. 1.

Prov. 24.

21.

But

But I will conclude all with an Observation of one remarkable Passage in your *Preface*, in the following Words, viz. *I prayed heartily to God that if I were in a Mistake, he would let me see it, that I might not forfeit the Exercise of my Ministry for a mere Mistake, and, I thank God, I have received that Satisfaction which I desired.*

(Which I presume no Body doubts.) And I suppose the foregoing Words are to satisfy the World, that you received better satisfaction from your hearty praying to God, than from the Convocation-Book. If not, why is it made use of as an Argument of freeing you from a supposed Doubt; for you were, or you were not satisfied before your praying, &c. Now if you were, then it was needless and impertinent to pray to God to let you see your Mistake, when there was none. If not, then 'tis plain your Satisfaction was not owing to B. Overill's Book, but to your hearty praying, &c. But after all, how shall any other Body be satisfied that your Satisfaction in that Case was owing to your praying to God, &c. Or that he was pleased to illuminate your Understanding so, as to give a better Exposition of *Rom. 13.* than you had done heretofore in your *Case of Resistance*. But give me leave to put a Case: Suppose a Man had a mind or inclination to do some particular thing which is Ill in its own Nature, or perhaps he is in some doubt whether it be or no; but the better to inform his Judgment, he goes and prays heartily to God for a Satisfaction touching the Lawfulness of the Matter, (though possibly he might be resolved to do it before.) After which, finding his desires more strong, and his inclination to do it rather increased than abated, is he then to take it for granted, that God has answer'd his Request, and that he is sure he is in the Right in doing the said Ill, or doubtful Thing. If so, then *Cromwel*, and others of the Regicides that murder'd *Charles I.* was in the Right also, for divers of them made use

use of the same Plea. And *Harrison* at his Tryal seem'd to be angry at those Words in his Indictment, *Of not having the Fear of God before his Eyes, but by the Instigation of the Devil, &c.* For he said, *He always had the Fear of God before his Eyes, and sought him Night and Day with Tears, till he received (like you) such Satisfaction as he desired.* And so consequently it was the Lord's Work, (as it was called in those Days) though done by the ways of the Devil. But we all know this ridiculous Plea would be admitted before an earthly Tribunal, and whether it will before an heavenly one, do you judge: For then I am afraid it will be to little purpose our saying, *We thought, or we believed, and heartily prayed, and received such Satisfaction as we desired, that we were in the Right,* (though at the same time perhaps we were conscious of breaking God's positive Commands.) And though we should press the matter yet further, (as our Lord says) *Many will say* ^{Mat. 7.22,} *to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy Name, and in thy Name cast out Devils, and in thy Name do many wonderful Works?* And then I will profess unto them, *I never knew you, depart from me that work Iniquity.* From all which 'tis rational to conclude, That the receiving of such a Satisfaction as you (and others before you) talk of, *after praying, &c.* is not a sufficient Reason for their doing any thing they have a mind to do, unless it be in its own Nature good, and not contrary to the written Word of God, which is a better Rule to direct us in those matters, than any such Phanatical, Enthusiastick Notions. I do not mean of *praying to God*, which without doubt nothing, if sincere, can be better; but drawing from thence such unwarrantable Consequences, which you cannot but know have been made use of as a colour for the worst of Villanies, and I am persuaded there are few but believe you were as well satisfied (as to your Mistake) *before, as after praying, &c.* for what relation had
such

such sort of *Cave* to Mr. Jenkins, and your *Turkish* *Pro-*
destinations *for* *the* *East* *Indies* *for* *if* *that* *were* *ever* *true* *it* *will*
always remain so if neither he nor you had ever preach'd
or pray'd in your Lives. And supposing it true in spite of
all your nice Distinctions, there is no successful Villany
that has been done since the Creation but may be justifi'd.
Nay, the very Surrender of Mons to the French King by
the same Rule) must be thought very just and reasonable,
because he having set down before it armed with your
Authority (*of having Power to crush them into Obedience*)
and by shutting your Reasons into the Town, gave the
Inhabitants a Mathematical Demonstration of his having
a *Providential Title* to both a *Lawful King* and *Governor*,
without intrenching upon the *R. of Spain's* legal Right; for
he, as well as the late King James, may recover it again if he
can. From which Argument we may infer, That the same
Providence that removes a Prince from his Crown and
Legal Rights, or Them from him, may (as in King Charles
the Second's Case) restore them again, without Wrong
being done to any Body all the while, because (as you say)
it is the work of Providence, and the Person in Possession is
always in the Right. Which I confess is good News for
great Princes, though bad for little ones; for if Strength
and Force be the only determination of Right and Wrong,
Religion and Laws will quickly become useles, and then
I am sure your Profession as well as mine will be none of
the best: But such wise and great Men as you may say
what they please. But for my part, I could as easily be
persuaded that there is no God, as believe his most holy
Commandments may be broke for the publick Good, or
that we may follow our own scanty Notions of Providence
contrary to Precept.